



## **FAMILY ASSOCIATION**

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### *NEWSLETTER SEPTEMBER 2004*

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#### **2004 REUNION REPORT FROM JESSE VAWTER**

The family met July 15<sup>th</sup> through 18<sup>th</sup> at Colorado Springs, Colorado for the 2004 VVV Reunion. Everyone had a great time, from the reports and surveys that we received. When we went to Colorado, they were 2 ½ years into a drought. However, after the VVV'ers arrived in town, the skies parted and the drought ended. We received no complaints about the facilities, the foods served or the costs of the meals or rooms. We hosted Hospitality night on Thursday, although there was no official count, both rooms of the suite were fully occupied for several hours. Our cousins renewed old acquaintances and met new cousins. Apparently, every one had a good time. The Executive Committee met in a meeting room for over an hour, when the meeting was over, I went back to the suite, and there were cousins still visiting and having a good time together.

On Friday morning, we open the VVV Reunion with the ringing of the cowbell by Krista Johnston, the pledge to the Flag led by Garry Vawter and a opening prayer by Billy Mack Vawter. We were all a little anxious about the 2004 attendance due to its being farther west.

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We were down in attendance a little due to illnesses and schedule conflicts, but we also had 8 new members, and would have had 7 or 8 more. Marcella Kimmick from Lancaster, Texas, brought a total of 8 to the Flying W Ranch on Friday night. We were looking forward to visiting with them, but they were caught in the traffic caused by the downpour on Friday. They arrived after every one was already seated. They stayed for the meal and entertainment and visited with several VVV members, but the soggy surroundings made visiting with the new people almost impossible. A good time was had by all that went to the Flying W Ranch. We enjoyed a chuck wagon meal, and some excellent western songs and bunk-house humor by the ranch hands. For those that were able to go earlier, even though it rained hard for several hours, we were able to visit several very interesting shops, got to see a horse get a new set of shoes, visit a Christian country store, a wonderful book store, with several books about the Duke and other famous cowboys, and an outstanding western clothing store. The Flying W. furnished yellow ribbons if you wanted to remember someone not with us because of their service to our country. Several of our friends are serving in the armed forces in Iraq, and their names were placed on these yellow ribbons for all to see and remember.

During the day on Friday, we had two genealogy sessions, one on the early Vawters, before coming to America by Greg Gruman. Greg did an excellent job. We sure hope to have him back again. The second genealogy session was by Jim Vaughters and Georgene Jurgensen about the Vawters in the western states. As usual, these two did an excellent job.

During the free time on Friday, several went to the Air Force Academy Visitors Center museum and Cadet Chapel, while others saw the sights in and around Colorado Springs.

We started Saturday morning with a business meeting. Due to illness or having other unavoidable circumstances, several of our faithful members were not there and a summary report of the minutes from 2003 was read, the treasury report was read and accepted. The 2003 minutes will be read along with the 2004 minutes and accepted at the 2005 reunion. We had free time until the banquet.

The Executive Committee suggested that a panel of at least five members be appointed by the president to review sites for future reunions. The six members of the panel and their email addresses are: Ellen Cummings ([Ellenwickerc@aol.com](mailto:Ellenwickerc@aol.com)), Ted Vawter (AdiN@arrl.net) Karla Quigley (Karlaq3663@yahoo.com) Cheri Jex ([schatz@jex.org](mailto:schatz@jex.org)), Georgene Jurgensen ([gjurgensen@tampabay.rr.com](mailto:gjurgensen@tampabay.rr.com)) and Phil Vaughter (PRV37@aol.com). A suggestion was made to have a website available where we could learn about new cousins and find out what is happening within the family. The current newsletter is mailed to finite number of addresses, but the website would potentially be viewed by many people. The website would not replace the newsletter. Jordan Johnston agreed to head up this venture and will update us in the future on his progress.

At the Saturday night banquet, we began by playing human bingo. We had a delicious meal prepared by the hotel. After the meal, it was leaked that it was Norma Jean Vawter's birthday, so we all sang "Happy Birthday" to her. Melba Ashburn read a poem in the Hoosier dialect, it was enjoyed by all. We recognized those that had served or were currently serving in the U. S. armed forces. We had Army (5), Air Force (3), Navy (8) and Marines (1).

The memorial service was dedicated to Wordna Wicker who had been an active VVV member and had conducted the memorial service for many years. It was also dedicated to Sgt. Kenneth

Grady who was severely wounded in Baghdad. In the memorial service, 16 were remembered with Laneil reading a few short statements about each and Krista and Katie Johnston placed a carnation in their honor.

We had 8 young people, the VVV Singers, volunteer to meet, organize, practice and present a short musical program. We were blessed and entertained by their presentation. We look forward to the VVV Singers entertaining us again in Virginia. If any one has youth, please encourage them to come and participate. The young people enjoyed being the VVV Singers, and the adults enjoyed it also.

We had 76 people east at the banquet, 2 left after eating, so when we had a roll call by state, we had 74 people representing 19 states. Texas has 12, followed closely by Idaho with 9.

Patricia Renton donated a beautiful hand-made quilt and a book "Farm Rhymes" by James Whitcomb Riley and illustrated by Will Vawter for auction. The book was sold to Norma Wicker for \$45. The quilt went to Jim Vaughters for his high bid of \$100. Proceeds from the auction went to the VVV treasury. Thanks to Patricia Renton, Norma Wicker, Jim Vaughters and to all who participated in the auction either by bidding or by cheering someone who was.

The nominations for officers were: Garry Vawter (President), J. W. Vawter (Vice-president), Judy Blanks (Secretary), Norma Jean Vawter (Treasurer), Barbara Vawter (1<sup>st</sup> Assist. Treasurer), Cheryl Kelly (2<sup>nd</sup> Assist. Treasurer), Bonita Welch (Newsletter Editor), Caroline Scarlett (Associate Newsletter Editor), Jim Vaughters (Historian, Archivist). The floor was opened for nominations from the floor and discussion as to why we now have a 2<sup>nd</sup> Assistant Treasurer. After a short discussion, a motion from the floor closed the nominations. The vote carried by all in favor of accepting the nominations, with none opposing. I took the opportunity to thank the association for allowing me to be President for the past two years. With that the gavel was passed to the new president Garry Vawter. Phil Vaughter presented Garry with his new President's Badge.

Garry then asked Ellen Cummings to come forward and announce that the 2005 Reunion will be in Fredericksburg, Virginia. Ellen discussed what is available in Fredericksburg and invited us all to attend. The dates are July 14-16, 2005. We will see you there. Cheri Jex from Idaho came forward to say she would like to host a reunion in the future, maybe 2006 in Bear Lake Valley, Idaho.

Ellen Cummings led us in holding hands and singing "Bless be the Tie That Binds".

Karla Quigley lead a devotional on Sunday morning before we started for home. Her topic was "Why did Christ have to Suffer?" Good job, Karla.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the association for allowing me to be President for the past two years, and I would like to thank each one of you who gave a simple word of encouragement either by word of mouth, by card or letter or by email. And last but certainly not least, I would like to thank Laneil and Karla for their continued support and help.

Sincerely,

Jesse

**MEMORIAL SERVICE 2004**

**By Laneil Vawter**

Tonight we are going to dedicate our memorial service to two very special people. First to Wordna Wicker, who gave so freely to the VVV Association in many areas. She was especially dedicated to providing meaningful Memorial Services at each reunion. She passed on an attitude of service to many of our young people as she allowed them to assist her with the flowers. I do not think a memorial service will ever be held without our always thinking of Wordna.

Also we want to remember Sgt. Kenneth Grady, son of Judith Crawford, who was wounded in March in Baghdad. He was serving with his unit from St. Louis, Mo. When he was severely wounded. He had emergency surgery in Baghdad for multiple injuries. He was transported to Germany, underwent more treatment and currently remains in Walter Reed hospital. We appreciated the sacrifice given by this young man and his family for our country. We should keep him in our prayers.

Call for assistants for flowers: Krista and Katie Johnston

Read: John 14:1-3

As we read the information provided, please stand in honor of your family member.

**Norah Reid Vawter**

Norah was born on January 18, 1909 in South Shields, Durham, England and died on September 18, 2002 in Woodstock, Virginia at the age of 93. Norah immigrated at age 13 and there met and later married Robert Leander Vawter in Indianapolis, Indiana. She was preceded in death by her husband and son Robert L. Vawter, Jr. She is survived by 4 daughters, 24 grandchildren and 46 great-grandchildren.

**Tom Austin**

Several VVV members visited with Tom Austin at the 2002 Reunion in Elberton, Georgia. He remembered the visit with the Vaughters until his death in April 2003 at the age of 103.

**Ida Mai Vawter Earls**

Ida Mai Earls, 87, of Milan, Tennessee died June 28, 2003. She was retired from Milan Mills, and a member of Cumberland Presbyterian Church in Milan. She is survived by her husband, Carson Earls, a son, 3 daughters, 7 grandchildren and 10 great-grandchildren.

**Robert Ashburn**

Robert Ashburn was born in 1921 in Nebraska and died in Idaho on October 20, 2003. He married Melba Vawter in 1943. He was an engineer for the Northern Pacific Railway and collected railroad memorabilia for 40 years. Robert was a long time employee of the railway and Melba taught school for 30 years. He minded the train while she trained the mind. He is survived by his wife of 60 years. He had 3 children and 6 grandsons.

**Ruth Lucille Morrison**

Ruth Morrison, 94, of Indiana died on December 14, 2003. She was a homemaker and a secretary for the Farm Bureau, a member of Hayden United Methodist Church and very active in her community. She is survived by 2 sons and 3 grandchildren. Her mother was a Vawter.

**Ila Vawter**

Bob and Ila Vawter and his parents were long time attendees of the VVV reunions. Ila played the violin for many programs. Bob, as we know, died a few years ago and Ila remarried.

**William S. Wiley**

William Wiley, 93, of Gulfport, Mississippi died December 15, 2003. He was retired from the US Navy after 22 years of service. He was a member of Hickory Flat Baptist Church and a former commander of the VFW in Tupelo. He is survived by a daughter and a granddaughter, as well as several other family members and friends.

**Silas Marvin Vawter**

Silas Vawter, 91, of Oklahoma City, OK died on December 30, 2003. He was born December 18, 1912 in Bethany, OK, the youngest of 11 children. He was retired from Southwestern Bell Telephone Company. He was a member of Mayfair Church of Christ in Oklahoma City and was an elder in the University Church of Christ in Norman, OK. He is survived by a daughter, 4 grandchildren, and 1 great-grandchild.

**Wendell “Wink” Vaughters**

Wink Vaughters, 55, of Georgia, was tragically killed on December 25, 2003. Wink Vaughters was survived by his parents, S.B. (Silvey) & Rebecca Vaughters as well as by siblings Carol Sellers, Brice Vaughters and Steve Vaughters.

**Merrill A. Jones**

Merrill Jones, 72, of Indianapolis, Indiana died January 11, 2004. He had a degree in mechanical engineering from Purdue University. He was a licensed architect and land surveyor. He designed churches, health care facilities, commercial projects including the Seoul Theological Seminary in Korea. He was a member of his local Baptist church. He traveled to 32 countries on behalf of missions and missionaries. He ministered in jails in several counties for 30 years and founded the Brotherhood of Christian Prisoners newsletter and Bible study, and visited inmates regularly. He is survived by his wife of 51 years, 3 children, and 3 grandchildren. He is a descendant of William and Frances Vawter.

**Wordna Wicker**

Wordna Wicker, 77, of Pontotoc, Mississippi died March 10, 2004. She was a graduate of Mississippi State College for Women. She was a school teacher and legal secretary. She was a member of the First Baptist Church I Pontotoc. She was a member of the American Legion Auxiliary, and the Cosmopolitan Club. She was a State officer in the DAR and was a delegate to several national DAR conventions. She was an avid genealogist, an active member of the VVV, our first newsletter editor, and she and her husband, Fred, faithfully conducted these memorial service for many years. She is survived by her husband, Fred, a daughter, Ellen Cummings, a son, US Representative Roger Wicker, a foster daughter Mindy Theile, 5 grandchildren, and many other family members and friends.

**Silvey Brice Vaughters**

Silvey (S.B.) Vaughters passed away on April 2, 2004. He was a leader of the 2002 VVV Reunion in Elbert County, Georgia. He spoke for all of us when he prayed, “Lord, I’m proud to be a Vaughters.” Born on August 11, 1911 in Northern Dawson County, Georgia a 5<sup>th</sup> generation of the family to live there. He grew up among the mountain people and the old time honored ways of doing things. He was pleased to give copies of his autobiography “Real Life Experiences” to VVV cousins at that reunion. He is survived by his wife Rebecca, 4 children, 7 grandchildren, and 5 great-grandchildren. He left legacies and standards for all.

**Charles Franklin Kimberley**

Charles Franklin Kimberley was born on October 7, 1962 and died on February 10, 2004. Charles was the son of Sue Kimberley of Dallas, GA and the Grandson of Ola Vaughters Swafford of Dawson County, GA.

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### **Billy Ueal Coursey**

Billy Coursey of Oklahoma City, OK entered into rest on May 15, 2004. Born on August 3, 1950 in Aiken, SC. He was a Vietnam veteran who proudly served his country. He retired from the US Army in 1978. He retired as Director of Operations from Western Sizzlin Steak House in 1991. A wonderful and devoted husband, father, grandfather, brother and friend. He was an active member of Emmaus Baptist Church. He is survived by his wife of 33 years, Sharon, 1 son, 2 daughters, & a granddaughter, as well as his mother-in-law, Erma Vawter. He is also survived by his mother and countless other friends and relatives.

### **Johnny E. Waters**

Mr. Waters died Friday, April 2, 2004, at Northeast Georgia Medical Center following an extended illness. He was born on May 25, 1952, he was a lifelong resident of Dawson County. Mr. Waters was a truck driver. He also was a member of Bethel Baptist Church. Survivors include his wife, Eva Jo Waters, 2 daughters and 5 grandchildren.

### **K C Vaughters – 1988 – 2004**

Kenneth Charles Vaughters of Madison, Georgia died on May 22, 2004, three days after his 16<sup>th</sup> birthday. K.C. as he was called, was named for his father Kenneth and his oldest uncle Charles. K. C. was a good student and an outstanding athlete. As a freshman he set a school record in the track event of the 3200 meter (2 mile) run. In his first season on the wrestling team he pled 4<sup>th</sup> at state championships. K.C. is survived by his parents Kenneth Ray Vaughters and Lynn Walker Vaughters, and two brothers.

## **CONGRATULATIONS TO ROBERT L. VAWTER**

Robert L. “Bobbee” Vawter of Middletown, Delaware, was recently recognized for outstanding achievement in the Civil Air Patrol by the Air Force Association Diamond State Chapter. The following statement was issued:

“Colonel (CAP) Robert L. Vawter distinguished himself by exceptional leadership in and command of the Delaware Wing Civil Air Patrol, the all-volunteer, civilian, official auxiliary of the United States Air Force, by serving an extended five year tour of duty as Wing Commander. While no longer the Commander, Colonel Vawter remains extremely active in Wing affairs and has been instrumental in a number of critical areas. Specifically, he has developed and fostered key working relationships with numerous Federal agencies including the Drug Enforcement Agency, U. S. Customs Service, Environmental Protection Agency, and Occupational Safety and Health Association. These associations have resulted in operational opportunities for the Wing and improved stature and recognition of Civil Air Patrol. A strong believer in America’s most precious asset – the youth of today – Colonel Vawter is particularly involved in the Wing’s CAP Cadet Orientation Flights. Colonel Vawter is a stalwart icon through the Wing and the Middle East Region. In recognition of his long, dedicated volunteer service, Colonel Robert L. Vawter has rightfully earned the Louisa Spruance Morse Award for Outstanding Achievement in Civil Air Patrol”.

Jim Vaughters, historian/archivist of the association, has sent the following items:

### **Missing Archives**

The historian/archivist packed the archives after the banquet at the reunion. One item is missing, probably in someone's files accidentally. It is a letter size box, 8 ½ X 11", containing the programs and files of the June 2003 ceremony in Franklin County, Georgia, honoring the Confederate grave of Hiram Vaughters. These documents are the only ones of their kind – there are no extras. Please search your belongings and return them to Jim Vaughters.

### **Tapes of Greg Gruman's Lecture**

The feature presentation at the 2004 reunion was by Greg Gruman of Longmont, Colo. He covered the history of medieval Europe, the Vawter name and towns, the Normans, the Battle of Hastings, early England, and the beginnings of movement to this country. He based much of the lecture on the five trips he has made to the area. The 1 ½ hour talk was videotaped, and tapes of the presentation are available for \$25.00. Checks should be made payable to the VVV Family Association and mailed to Jim Vaughters. He will then send the tapes, which were produced by Robert L. Vawter.

### **Booklet of James W. Vawter, Oklahoma Pioneer**

Silas Vawter's daughter, Pat, printed the booklet of "Uncle Jimmy," as Fred Wicker knew him. They were distributed at the 2004 reunion and more can be printed if needed. Please let Jim know this fall and he will inform Pat. There is no charge for this informative 20 page booklet that includes documents and photographs.

### **Lithographs of Vauter's Church**

The members of Vauter's Church would like to know this fall about how many copies of the painting to prepare for next year's reunion. The prints are approximately 18" X 24" watercolor and cost \$40.00 each. Please inform Jim so he can give them a number. They also have available a small box of note cards picturing the church for \$10.00.

### **THANK YOU**

Again, we thank the ones who help by sending information for the newsletter. Please watch your local newspapers for items about members or friends of the association and mail or fax a copy to the news editor. Many times the only way we know of the death of a member is when a newsletter is returned. There have even been a few times when we have known only because someone sends a not so pleasant e-mail wondering why we continue to send a newsletter to a deceased family member.

### **CHARLIE VAUGHTERS**

The third child of George Robinson Vaughters and Epsey Catherine Bennett Vaughters was Homer Charley Vaughters, born in Dawson County, Georgia, in 1885. Uncle was a hard working farmer, good natured man, and was loved by all the family. He died in 1944 and left three wonderful children – Lella Bruce, who lived in Dawson County, Luna Harben of Dahlonga, and Boyd Vaughters, who during his lifetime was the second Vaughters preacher at Bethel Baptist Church. (The first was his grandfather George.)

George's brother Henry had two sons and named one Charlie. He was born in 1890 and died in 1930. He did not marry – perhaps the closest he came was being a witness at the wedding of his first cousin Hiram Solomon Andrew Jackson Vaughters to Coie Mae Burt in 1914.

Back in Elbert County, Charlie was the second child of James Benson Glean Vaughter and Mary Beulah Sanders Vaughter. He was born in 1902, but lived only a year. He is buried beside his parents; his brothers Swift, Francis Harrison, and Julian; and his sister, Miriam, at Harmony Baptist Church Cemetery.

George and Epsey's second son, Linzey Vaughters, and his wife Tomie Anderson had five girls and finally a boy, Charlie Linzey. He was born in 1921 and died in 1994. His descendants include several with the names Charlie and Linzey. A girl now carries on the long line of Lindseys.

Homer, Charlie, and Charlie Linzey are buried at Bethel Baptist Church Cemetery.

The newest Charlie, born in 2000, is the son of Jonathan and Alisa Vaughters, the grandson of Jim and Donna Vaughters, and the great-grandson of Cleveland Vaughters. Since he lives in Denver, his grandparents were able to take him to the 2004 reunion in Colorado Springs.

### **IN REMEMBRANCE**

Ila Louise Vawter Gilmore, 70 of Newage, Michigan, die Thursday, February 26, 2004 in Grand Rapids. She was a member of First Baptist Church in Newago and retired from General Motors.

Surviving are her husband, Keith LaMarr Gilmore, to whom she was married just a month before her death; a son, Robert Dale Vawter; two grandchildren, Peter John Vawter and Aimee Louise Vawter; and her mother-in-law, Margaret G. Vawter.

She was preceded in death by her parents, T. Alger and A. Myrl Dygert; her first husband, Robert L. Vawter; and a daughter, Bonnie Jean Vawter DeHaan.

Ila and her first husband were longtime members of the association. Many will remember the violin music she provided for several memorial services. A tribute written by a friend states, "Before playing a hymn on her violin she would always read the words to us in her soft but clear voice so that we could more fully worship as we listened to the beautiful melody of her violin."

Patricia Jane Vawter Flew, 76, of Jackson, Tennessee, died July 2, 2004. Born Dec. 15, 1927, in Chicago, Ill., she was the daughter of Wylie and Goldie Dedmon Vawter. She married Frank Thomas Flew on July 1, 1948.

She was a 1959 graduate of Union University and had worked as an LPN in several nursing homes.

Surviving are sons Frank Patrick Flew of Beech Bluff, George W. Flew of Jackson, and John C. Flew of Medon; a daughter Cissy Nichols of Medon; seven grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

She was preceded in death by her parents and her husband.



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